

Date 13 January 1976

TO : CIA Task Force  
FROM : The Review Staff,   
SUBJECT : SSC/HSC Request

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RECEIVED: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

A conversation with Aaron Donner of the HSC Staff, late in the day on 12 January, indicates that we may be getting a crack at the HSC draft report, perhaps by Thursday or Friday. The Staff is currently engaged in a frenetic series of re-writes, in an attempt to have a draft ready for Chairman Pike, when he comes back to Washington on 14 January. (Pike saw an earlier draft over the Holidays.)

I asked Donner how tight our time frame would be, once the report is sent to us for technical review. He replied, with a straight face "We'll give you at least 24 hours." It is more likely that we will have 48 hours, or over this week-end, but in any case, we will be under considerable time pressure.

Once the HSC tells us that their report is available, it will be picked up immediately, copied, and hand-carried to all Task Force members so that the substantive review process can begin. The Review Staff has been told by Searle Field that the HSC report will have three sections, a tight text and more detailed foot-notes. (See Review Staff 76/02, 2 January, for more detail on the report.) The second section of the report- The Investigative Record- will have three parts- costs, risks and value received. An HSC staffer reports that the part on risks has been completed. It has 390 double-spaced pages of text, and twice that amount of foot-notes. He says that all names of people and countries have been removed from both text and foot-notes, but that it is easy to determine what places are being referred to in the report when its text is compared with recent leaks in the press. The staffer says that other parts of the report are even longer ~~than~~ than the portion dealing with risks. The staffer cannot estimate the total length of the report, but he says the

Comments:

	Action	Info
SC/DCI		X
A/DDA	X	
A/DDI	X	
A/DDO	X	
A/DDSET	X	
OGC		X
OLC		X
IG		X
Ben Evans		A
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writing process is being accomplished under great time pressures, and that it is not as thoughtful a process as he had hoped it would be. This staffer says that the Agency "comes out pretty well" in the report, which states flatly that CIA has not been out of control, and has in fact been totally responsive to the President and Dr. Kissinger.

This is to alert the Task Force that a period (short and intensive) of review lies in the near future. To aid in that process, attached hereto is a paper on principles and standards which should be used in reviewing the HSC final report.



25X1A

SUBJECT: Principles and Standards for Review of HSC and  
SSC Draft Papers

1. The Agency expects to have an opportunity to review draft reports of both the HSC and SSC. This will apply to both review for declassification for publication, and for handling in classified form. In the former instance comments will concentrate on protection of intelligence sources and methods, and in both instances the Agency's factual corrections are requested. Unclassified publication entails some exposure in any event, but the Agency's review and comments must be professional, sound and defensible. The purpose of this memorandum is to discuss the approach to be taken. (See especially paragraph 4.)

2. As a general practice, we will continue to propose sanitization or paraphrasing to (1) protect sensitive sources and methods, (2) protect foreign liaison relations, and (3) protect the names of cooperating individuals and commercial and other organizations. Sample situations in which security questions may arise are below:

a. General summary statements of operational activity (e.g., "CIA has some third world leaders on a retainer") should not be objected to on security grounds alone. Specific references, however, singling out countries and so describing persons that they can be identified, would be questioned.

b. Descriptions of operational techniques (where employed) should be considered carefully to ensure that they do not reveal operational methods to a degree that they would be harmful.

c. Information revealing secret operations, themselves, as distinguished from sources and methods used in those operations, should be protected. While the Agency may find itself compelled to concur in some description of a large CA activity, it should give consideration first to the broad damage that would result from disclosure if publication is unacceptable;

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then, if overruled, we will still seek to minimize that damage in careful sanitization.

d. Specific identification of Agency employees below the top command level, or descriptions that make their identity readily ascertainable (e.g., COS

25X1A

[REDACTED]

will be questioned.

e. Specific mention of proprietary-type entities is objectionable, as would be descriptions that would locate and identify them. A general discussion of the existence of proprietaries cannot be objected to,

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

f. Description of cover arrangements should be kept very general, avoiding any detail that would reveal local strengths or serve to pinpoint individuals, or that permit compromise of cooperating cover organizations.

g. Reference to classified intelligence reports and studies, in the report, should be studied carefully to ensure that they do not reveal intelligence sources and methods. In some instances, a given piece of information may be known to only a very few individuals, and publication of it in unclassified form would permit identification of the source. In other instances, certain information could be known only through technical collection systems. It is doubtful that any one bit of intelligence would contribute much to most discussions, generalized summaries sufficing to make whatever points the HSC has in mind, but there may be instances in which this problem is presented.

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h. Reference to specific intelligence gaps that will reveal U.S. capabilities in areas important to the national interest.

i. Appraisals of the performance characteristics of Communist or other foreign military equipment should be carefully considered before agreement to release in unclassified form. If the information has been released officially there is no reason to object to its publication in the unclassified HSC report, unless textual treatment raises other issues of security; if it is in the public domain, but has not been confirmed by official publication, its inclusion in the report should be considered carefully. Publication of estimated performance characteristics may reveal technical collection capabilities. It may be that publication of performance characteristics would come in discussion of a current policy issue (e.g., the BACKFIRE bomber), which would raise additional questions of classification.

j. Reporting on recent or current foreign capabilities and intentions, and estimates of these, should be reviewed closely for discussion with the HSC Staff. National policy-level materials, which may compromise national interests, must be handled specially.

k. Specific organizational descriptions must be studied carefully. In this context, any detailed summary of overseas organization and activities must be reviewed for unintended disclosures, or obvious revelations.

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m. Inclusion of non-CIA paper, coming from the Executive level of government, should be identified for appropriate clearance.

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n. The interests of other government agencies and departments will be kept in mind, to ensure that their interests are considered for coordination. Where reference is made to other departments or agencies, it is appropriate for CIA to comment when it relates to CIA activities. It also is appropriate to volunteer factual corrections. In such instances, our comments should note an assumption that these will be properly coordinated with those organizations.

The above list of questions is intended as a sample of the sort of issues that may arise. The nature of the subject matter is such that a comprehensive list cannot be prepared in advance, and the issues will have to be dealt with as they arise.

3. As there is some concern on the part of the HSC Staff members that the security review agreed between Chairman Pike and the President may constitute some form of censorship, care should be exercised to raise only real issues of security, where it is proposed that the draft is intended for unclassified publication. The manner in which the Agency handles its security review also will have an effect on the attitude of the HSC Staff members, so statements of security reservations must be sober and professional, with clear alternatives being offered for how the question can be resolved. The Agency's purpose is to facilitate publication of a properly sanitized, declassified report, where unclassified publication is intended.

4. A relatively consistent response by the Agency will facilitate exchanges with HSC and SSC Staff members. The above discussion is intended to contribute to this. Additionally, it will also help if the Agency's format for conveying its comments is consistent. To this end, comments should be made on a separate paper, each comment keyed to the page and line of the draft, first stating the problem raised by the statement in question, why its unclassified publication in that form is subject to reservation, and proposing either a way to resolve the problem editorially by rephrasing the passage, or simply by deleting certain specific statements where they do not impair the thrust of the paper or the flow of writing. This would serve as the basis for discussions with HSC and SSC Staff members, giving them a complete statement on each issue in order to prepare for further exchanges.

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5. It is anticipated that working sessions will be arranged following the initial review, to address the questions raised by the comments.

6. The HSC and SSC Staff people have indicated an interest in Agency comments on the factual accuracy of the drafts, although it is not yet clear that the Agency will be requested to conduct such a review in every instance. This question is sure to arise in the review of reports planned for unclassified publication, but the preparation of classified reports by the HSC does not require review by the Agency. There is nothing at present to prevent the Agency from offering comments on factual accuracy or, for that matter, on conclusions when the opportunity presents itself; however, neither committee is obliged to accept these comments. Any factual corrections that are offered should be handled as are the security comments, separately, soberly and professionally.

7. The Review Staff will undertake to coordinate the distribution of papers for review, to monitor progress; and assist in working reviews of comments with HSC and SSC Staff members that follow the review.

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USE ONLY☐ CONFIDENTIAL☐ SECRET

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SUBJECT: (Optional)

Sanitization Guidelines for HSC/SSC Draft Reports

FROM:

4E27 Hqs

EXTENSION

B 7961  
R 1788  
G 3205

NO.

DATE

13 January 1976

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S  
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. DTR and DDTR have copies  
936 COFC BLDG

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Attached is a sanitization guideline for use with drafts of HSC/SSC reports. As noted by [ ] we may be receiving these drafts as early as 15 January 1976.

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